

Development of the Econet for long-term conservation of biodiversity in the Central Asia Ecoregions

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Shirin Karryeva, Turkmenistan

shirinkarryeva@mail.ru



PAs and Econet

- COP-7, 2004, 188 Parties CBD agreed on PoWPAs
- Objective of PoWPA – establishment and maintenance by 2010 for terrestrial and by 2012 for marine areas of a global network of comprehensive, effectively managed, and ecologically representative national and regional systems of PAs.
- Approach and the concept of Econet all CBD Parties have therefore committed, by 2015, to **“integrate PAs into broader land- and seascapes and sectors so as to maintain ecological structure and function”**.

PEBLDS

- In 1995 the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) was adopted
- 54 European countries (including 5 CA countries) endorsed the action to establish the Pan-European Econet (PEEN) within the period of 20 years
- Ministerial Conference in Kiev, 2003, adopted PEEN declaration with the aim of implementing in Europe the CBD PoWPA

Econet Central Asia



- 2003 -2006 WWF Central Asian programme was running GEF-UNEP WWF middle-size project «Econet Central Asia»

- Econet is developed as a regional network. The main reason for that is that nature conservation and ecosystem development problems of some transboundary territories can't be solved by any of the bordering countries alone. Vivid examples of that – Amudaria river valley, which secures common coordinated actions of all bordering countries. Another example – Ustyurt – where winter migrations of saiga to the south, and spring migrations back to the north – can be affected and disrupted by the border engineering systems – in case that needs of passages for saiga won't be initially envisaged, planned, adjusted and built.

Summary

- Econet of Central Asia - integration of biodiversity conservation in the contexts of socio-economical development - integrated method, regional GAP analysis, commitments of the countries to the PoWPA CBD
- Central Asia is a region of 4 million square kilometers, uniting 5 independent countries (Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Republic of Uzbekistan) with unique biodiversity of great variety: various types of natural complexes - plain steppes, deserts, mountain forests, high mountain meadows and tundra cushion plant formations, with more than 7,000 species of higher plants, centres of origin of a great variety of wild ancestors of cultural plants, 900 species of vertebrates, etc.



Summary

- Hundred percent of the territory of 4 of these countries and half of the fifth one are qualified to be critical and vulnerable GL200 ecoregions of the World, while the rest half of the fifth country – Kazakhstan – is to a great extent represented by virgin steppes which recently exist nowhere else in the world.



What is Econet?

- The basis for biodiversity conservation in various types of ecosystems has always been based on the system of protected areas of different ranks. But intensive socio-economical development of the countries has led to a situation when protected areas are isolated one from another. They can't support optimal development of the environment as a whole.
- But further significant increase of the area of nature areas contradicts the goals of social-economical development of the countries.

- As a result, a new concept was developed. It is now widely implemented all over the world: **WEB FOR LIFE** concept of Econet. It's a system which combines protected nature areas of different status and territories with different sustainable use of nature resources.



Econet consists of three major elements:

- **core areas** - usually represented by protected areas of different status
- **transit areas or ecological corridors** - areas that link core areas
- **buffer zones** - areas that protect both core areas and transit areas from outside interference.
- Combination of all Econet elements should guarantee long-term sustainability of ecosystem development in major ecoregions.



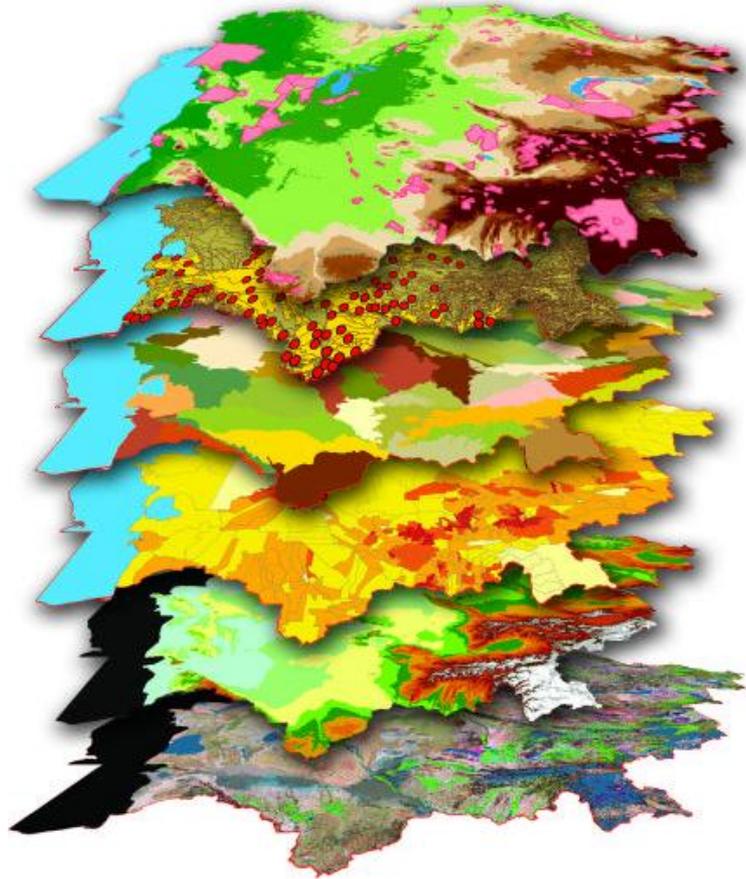
Goal of the Project

- The main goal of the project is creation of a united ecological network of Central Asia (ECONET) and its integration in the regional and national plans of sustainable development; development and practical implementation of optimal mechanisms of transboundary cooperation and coordination for the purpose of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of nature resources.

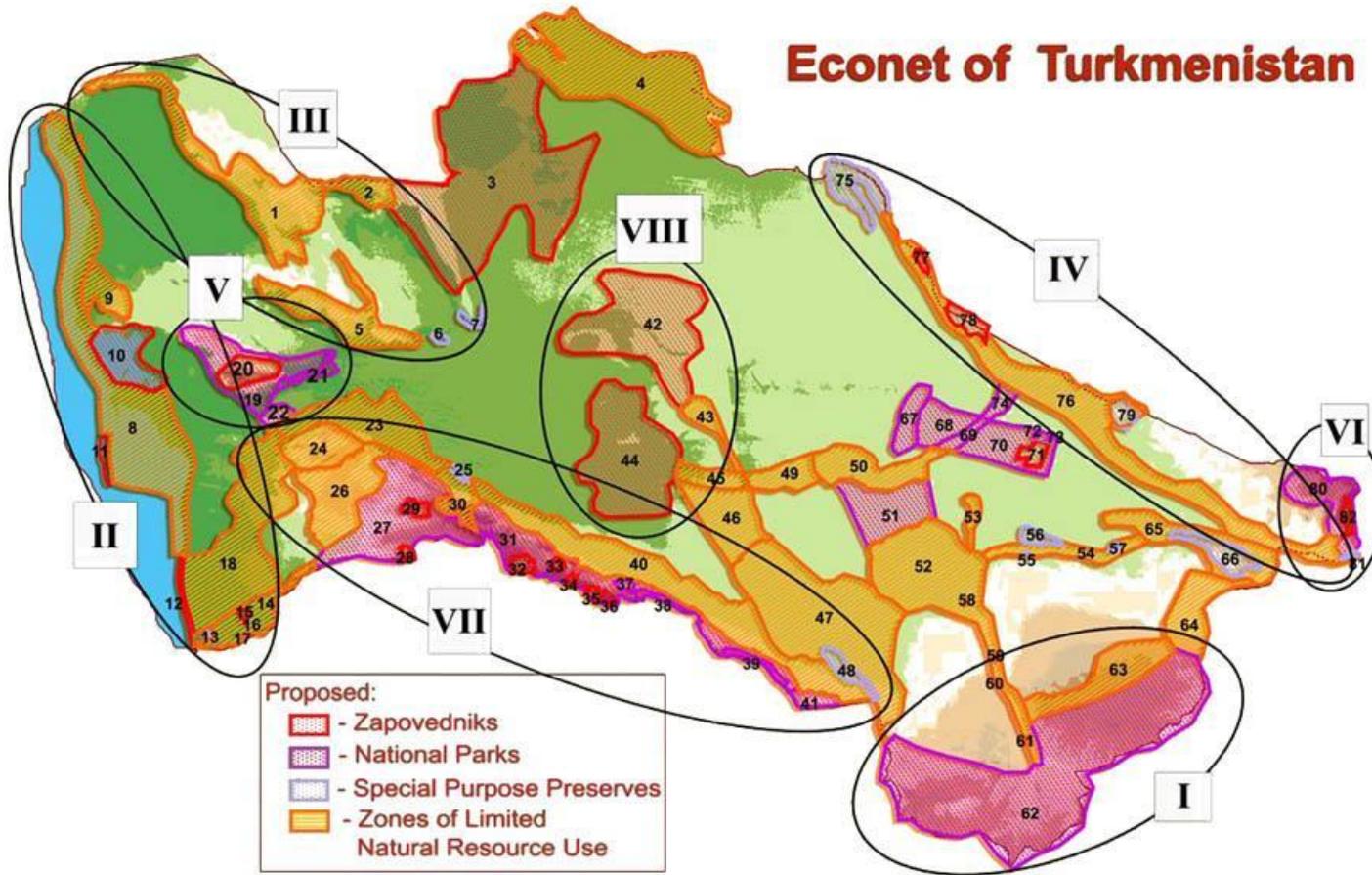
GAP analysis

- In order to identify such areas, a **GAP analysis of representativeness of existing system of PA** was conducted which is a direct contribution to the obligations of the range states in the frame of PoWPA CBD. It was based on integrated analysis of biodiversity characteristics and socio-economical situation in the region. Methodological approaches towards the planning of ecological networks at the ecoregional level were developed to implement of the designed ECONET Concept. The approaches, typical for Western Europe and based on the inventory and protection of landscapes (the latter retaining their natural structure), are not applicable in Central Asia, where extensive areas still remain untouched or slightly affected by human impact. The use of remote data (satellite images) and relevant maps allows one to approach the entire study area from different points of view at the same time, which in turn enables the identification of protected natural areas as a single integral system.

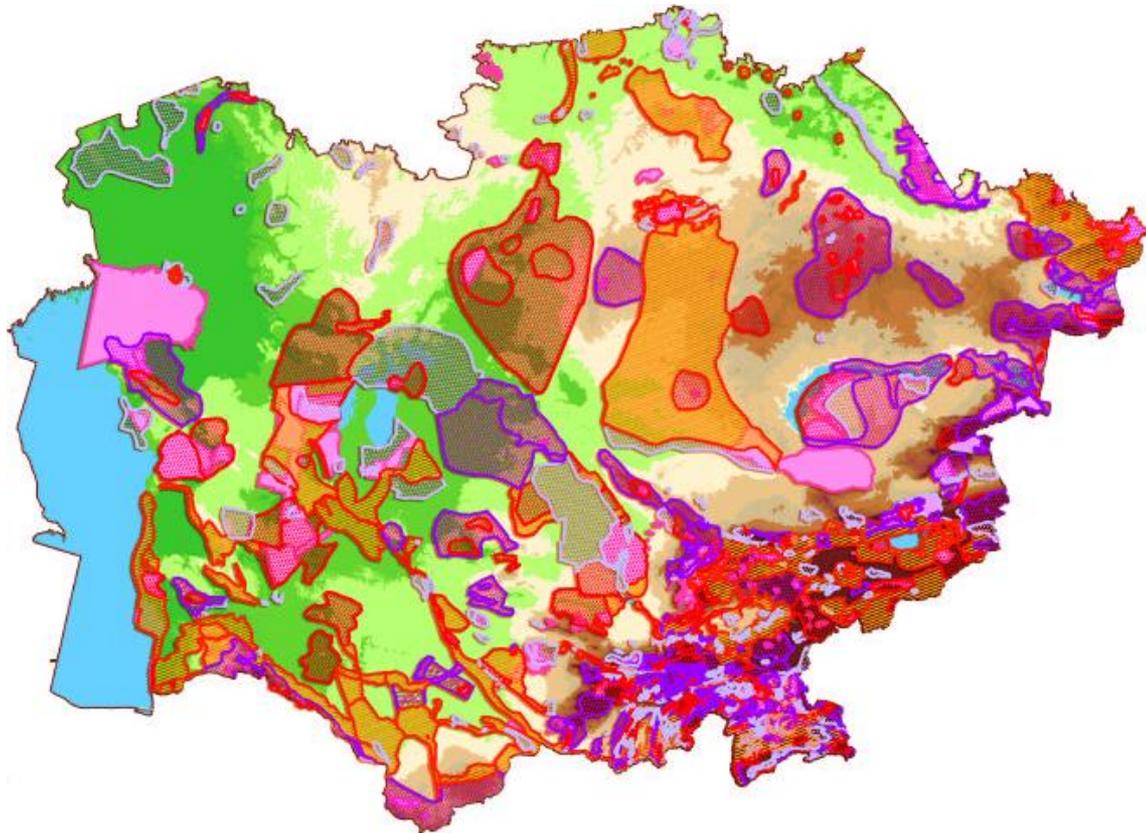
Integrated analysis



Econet of Turkmenistan



Econet in CA



PAs and planned econet

	<u>Existing system of PAs (% of the territory of the country)</u>				<u>Planned Econet - ecological network categories - (% of the territory of the country)</u>				<u>Planned Econet - PA categories (% of the territory of the country)</u>				
	<i>Zapovedniks</i>	<i>Nat. parks</i>	<i>Other PAs</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Core areas</i>	<i>Ecological corridors</i>	<i>Buffer zones</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Zapovedniks</i>	<i>Nat. parks</i>	<i>Other PAs</i>	<i>Areas of sustainable development</i>	<i>Total</i>
Kazakhstan	0.39	0.55	6.3	7.2	9.9	18.9	11.5	40.3	11.3	11.9	7.5	9.6	40.3
Kyrgyzstan	1.8	1.5	1.8	5.1	16.0	29.5	37.8	83.3	14.1	11.6	4.6	52.8	83.3
Tajikistan	0.7	16.4	1.9	19.1	18.2	24.1	3.9	46.2	4.5	19.8	14.2	7.7	46.2
Turkmenistan	2.4	0	2.3	4.7	19.5	23.3	6.7	49.5	9.9	6.9	1.8	30.8	49.5
Uzbekistan	0.4	1.1	3.7	5.2	9.8	13.3	19.6	42.7	10.9	7.5	9.3	15.0	42.7
REGION					12.1	18.9	12.8	44.0					

The main problems

- There is a series of problems in the biodiversity conservation of Central Asia to implement Econet, and its base – the system of protected areas of different status.
- **The first group of problems:** insufficient financial and technical support of the system of zapovedniks, absence of a satisfactory system of communication, absence of a unified system of data collecting, information exchange, etc. These problems are now being addressed by the efforts of Governments of the countries of the region, and by some special projects on national level (GEF-UNDP).

The main problems

- **The second group of problems:** the existing system of protected areas does not support the goals and the needs of biodiversity conservation of the region. Thanks to IUCN initiative, particular problems of the major zapovedniks of the region are analyzed now, and proposals are being developed in order to solve these problems.

The main problems

- **The third group of problems:** existing protected areas are isolated from each other, they are not fully representative for the whole biodiversity conservation of the region, the system of protected areas is not integrated in the context of socio-economical development of the countries, there is no coordination in the development of protected areas between the countries of the region.
- **ECONET planning as WEB FOR LIFE, common for all the region of Central Asia is the major target of GEF-UNEP-WWF project.**

- According to the decision of Intergovernmental Sustainable Development Commission (ISDC), Econet is supposed to be approved by all relevant Ministries of the countries of the region on national level, and by ISDC – on the regional level. It is integrated into the Regional Environmental Action Plan (REAP) as a major component which ensures biodiversity conservation, and this allows to integrate the biodiversity conservation in the contest of socio-economic development of the region.

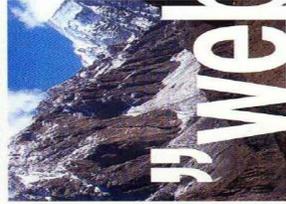
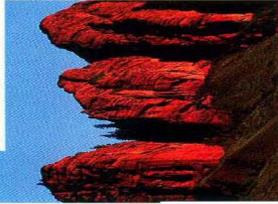


- It's clear, that no country has resources to implement the full scale Econet immediately. But endorsement of the Econet scheme and its' use as a base for the process of land reservation for future development (which is on-going in some countries of the region now) will guarantee future possibility of conservation of unique biodiversity of the region. **The full realization of the developed ECONET scheme would be a significant contribution by all countries in the region toward realizing the recommendations of the COP-7 and obligation of the countries on the PoWPA CBD.**



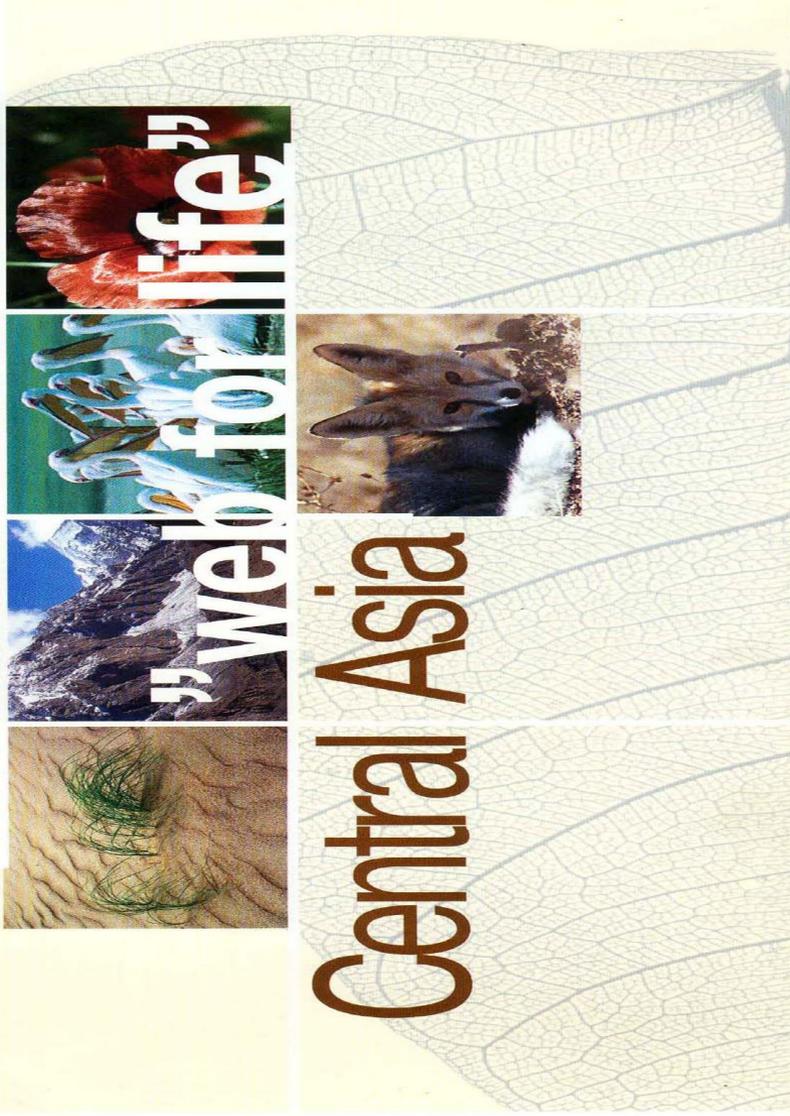


ECONET



“web for life”

Central Asia



THANK YOU FOR THE ATTENTION!

